

Wycombe bait Jack Charlton's glamour boys

WYCOMBE Wanderers will write yet another chapter in their history tomorrow afternoon, when they turn out in front of a bumper crowd of 12,000 people to play First Division Middlesbrough.

For this is the first time the club has ever reached the third round of the F.A. Cup in 90 years and indeed, the first time they have ever played a club from Division One of the Football League in any serious competition.

The cup "fever" in High Wycombe has been reminiscent of the Blues' F.A. Amateur Cup final appearance in 1957. Many will remember the scenes after the Wanderers had lost against Bishop Auckland.

Tickets for tomorrow's match went like hot cakes. In fact the first time they went on sale the clubhouse was not open until 10 a.m. but the queue was forming as early as 7.30. At its peak it stretched from inside the ground to Wycombe Hospital.

'Incredible'

Treasurer Roger Lee described the response as "incredible" and praised the people who had

waited patiently for their tickets in the rain.

In a few hours, all but a few tickets had been sold and the club expect the full 12,000 limit for the match. The "gate," incidentally, was fixed by the club and the police with safety and comfort in mind.

No doubt there are still those who were unable to get tickets, but they will still have a chance to

Don't forget the kick-off for tomorrow's F.A. Cup tie between Wycombe Wanderers and Middlesbrough has been brought forward to 2 p.m. Gates open at 12 o'clock.

watch the game — on television. London Weekend will be screening the match and also bringing their Saturday morning "On the ball" programme from the Wycombe committee room. The actual game will be shown on the "Big Match" on Sunday afternoon.

Owing to the television coverage, the kick-off time had to be brought forward an hour, from 3 p.m. to 2 p.m.

All in all, Saturday will be a unique occasion in the history of Wycombe Wanderers. The players, manager and the committee men have done what no others could before them — won through to the last 64 of the F.A. Cup. And what a prize for them in this round.

The draw was actually announced before the 'Blues' had beaten Bournemouth 2-1 in the second round replay at Dean Court and it was probably the incentive of a crack at Jack Charlton's Second Division champions that helped Wanderers to victory.

They could hardly have wished for a more attractive tie. Charlton himself is almost a household name throughout the country and his team are currently second only to Ipswich at the top of Division One.

The Blues' success has understandably attracted the attention of both the national Press as well as radio and television. The main topic has been the infamous Loakes Park slope. The fact of the matter is this: The pitch drops 11ft. from wing to wing.

Warming up

Just what effect this will have on Jack Charlton's men remains to be seen but they are arriving early at the ground to have a good look round and plan to spend at least ten minutes to warm up before the game. The team are staying the night at a Beaconsfield hotel on Friday and will then visit the ground before returning for a meal at the hotel.

But what of Wycombe's chances of success tomorrow? Immediately after the Bournemouth victory, Wanderers manager Brian Lee told reporters, "We've got no chance. I hold too much respect for professional football to consider a victory."

Lee's counterpart, Jack Charlton was not so emphatic. In fact, he is dreading the prospect of a match against an amateur side and has gone to great lengths to ensure against any slip-ups.

His assistant, Harold Shepperdson, watched both the Bournemouth and Sutton matches last month and holds a high regard for Wycombe.

On paper the Blues will have to pull off one of the biggest upsets in football history to win.

Some amateur clubs have come close to that feat in the past — Hendon at Newcastle last year and Tooting against Nottingham Forest in the 1950's.

For Wanderers to match such a feat is highly improbable, but not impossible. Whatever the outcome tomorrow, however, there's no doubt the club have climbed mountains to get this far in the competition and provided moments that will long be remembered.

The gates will open at 12 noon tomorrow with all turnstiles open to accept tickets.